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News

Capuchins will hold provincial assembly at HU

Friday, July 6, 2007 11:15 AM EDT

Huntington will play host to Capuchin Franciscan Friars and their associates from throughout the Midwest next week as the Catholic religious order maps out new ways carry out its mission.

"As fewer men enter religious life, our partners - whether they be employees, volunteers, benefactors, or donors - are going to become more important to carry on Capuchin mission," said Provincial Minister Daniel Anholzer. "This assembly is providing an opportunity to communicate with our friars and partners, plus giving everyone an opportunity to dialog with one another."

This is the first such assembly for the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph, which includes 180 friars, more than 250 employees, and thousands of volunteers. The province is headquartered in Detroit; the friars and their partners serve in a variety of ministries including social service, schools, chaplaincy, retreat houses and parishes in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Montana, Minnesota, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nicaragua, and Panama.

The Capuchins were once located in Huntington, living at the former St. Felix Friary - now the Good Shepherd Church of the United Brethren in Christ - from 1928 to 1980. Two Capuchin friars, Father Ron Rieder and Father John Guimond, continue to minister Huntington at SS. Peter and Paul Parish.

The Capuchins' history in Huntington was one reason the city was chosen as the site of the July 10-12 gathering. In addition, Anholzer said, they were also looking for a quiet contained atmosphere for their meetings.

The group will be treated to a bratwurst dinner at SS. Peter and Paul Church on July 10 the evening they arrive, and will attend 8 a.m. Mass Wednesday at the church. They'll be housed on the campus of Huntington University, where they will conduct their meetings. More than 100 friars and more than 125 partners are expected to attend.

"The Capuchin mission is very specific to the Franciscan tradition," Anholzer said. "As more employees and volunteers perform roles previously done by friars, we want to be certain that the mission is foremost in everyone's minds."

"Plus it's an excellent opportunity for everyone to meet one another and to network. Our province reaches from Michigan to Montana and into Central America. Perhaps a ministry in

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- Yes, I'm hanging on every word
- Sometimes " it depends on the issue
- Seldom " it's too early to worry about that kind of thing
- No. Just wake me when it's over

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The Capuchin order follows the example of St. Francis of Assisi, who lived in Italy from 1182 to 1226. Members, which include both priests and brothers, stress a common brotherhood as they work with the poor and preach the word of God.

The order came to the United States in 1856, settling in Wisconsin, and there are now seven Capuchin provinces in the country. Father Solanus Casey, a Detroit Capuchin who died in 1957, is being considered for sainthood.

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Members use the title OFM Cap. (Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin). The name Capuchin comes from the Italian word "capuche," the hood that is part of their habit.

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